WORSHIP

AS AN

Element of Sanctuary Service.

BY

REV. HENRY DARLING, D. D.

REPRINTED FROM THE

PRESBYTERIAN QUARTERLY REVIEW,

APRIL, 1862.

PHILADELPHIA:

WILLIAM S. YOUNG, PRINTER, NO. 52 NORTH SIXTH STREET,

1862.

F-39
D249

FROM THE LIBRARY OF

REV. LOUIS FITZGERALD BENSON, D. D.

BEQUEATHED BY HIM TO

THE LIBRARY OF

PRINCETON THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

SCC
9462

LIBRARY OF PRINCETON
JAN 13
THEOLOGICAL

WORSHIP

AS AN

Element of Sanctuary Service.

BY

REV. HENRY DARLING, D.D.

REPRINTED FROM THE
PRESBYTERIAN QUARTERLY REVIEW,
APRIL, 1862.

WILLIAM S. YOUNG, PRINTER, NO. 52 NORTH SIXTH STREET,
PHILADELPHIA:
1862.

PREFACE.

This Article, from the April Number of the Presbyterian Quarterly Review, is issued in a separate form by the Author, *simply* because of the importance of the subject it discusses, and in the hope that its usefulness would be increased by a wider circulation.

It is time that those churches which retain in their Sanctuary service the simplicity of Apostolic times and discard all medieval ritualism, should satisfy those yearnings for "*Worship*," which some devout minds in their communion feel, and which lead them to *look*—occasionally *to go*—elsewhere. That to do this we only need a *complete* and *full* development of our *own System*, this Article is an *humble* attempt to show. That it is far from an exhaustive treatment of the subject, no one can feel more keenly than the Author. So far however as it goes, he believes it to be in the right direction.

WORSHIP.

THE services of God's house, as usually conducted, may be regarded as comprising two great elements, *Worship* and *Instruction;* and although these elements are mutually helpful, and, to some extent, interpenetrate each other, yet they may, in our examination, be separately and distinctly considered. *Worship* is the act of paying divine honor to the Supreme Being, and includes those parts of divine service whereof Jehovah himself is the immediate object. *Instruction* is the communication of knowledge from one mind to another, and includes whatever in the service is the acting of men, upon the authority and commission of God, on others. The first comprises the prayers and praises of the sanctuary; the latter is limited to the reading and preaching of the word.

But, divine service composed of these two elements, it is plain that there is a certain relation that they ought always to sustain to each other, and that great care should be observed not to give to either an undue and disproportional prominence. In retiring from the house of God a congregation should feel that they have *worshipped*—that they have given to Jehovah that reverence and honor which are his due; and, at the same time, that they have obtained some new or clearer view of truth. But how seldom are both of these ends of divine service attained?

In the Romish Church the element of worship has almost

entirely supplanted that of instruction. The mass—and to this, in countries purely papal, divine service is almost wholly limited—is nothing but a symbolical representation of the sacrifice of Christ, and a great thank-offering. Indeed, as the ministry, according to the theory of Romanism, is a priesthood, and the pulpit an altar, there is in the whole system no place for instruction. It is not the business of a papal ecclesiastic to preach. He is not a teacher, to instruct men in the way of righteousness, but a priest, to appear before God in their behalf. And in strict agreement with this theory of popery has ordinarily been her practice. An old English Reformer, speaking of this Church in his day, quaintly remarked, "that if there were one vast gulf from Calais to Dover, it would not be large enough to contain its *unpreaching* bishops."

But, while the Romish Church has, in the order of her service, gone to this dangerous extreme of excluding all instruction, has the Protestant Church been always sufficiently careful to retain in her sanctuary service the element of worship? Has she never given an undue prominence to preaching? Luther once said that "the greatest and most important part of the service of God's house was the preaching and teaching of the word;" and doubtless the truth of the remark all Protestant Christians would admit. The minister of Christ, under the new dispensation, is not a priest, but a teacher, and by making, in this direction, full proof of his ministry, ought to give cause to the rejoicing multitude to exclaim, "How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings, that publisheth peace, that bringeth good tidings of good, that publisheth salvation." But is this "most important part" of divine service its all? Was Luther right when, to the remark just quoted, he added "that wherever the word of God is not preached, it is better neither to sing, nor to read, nor to assemble together." Of very much church-going, in our day, the only motive is sermon-hearing. This is the *kernel* of the service, and around it all the prayers and praises of the sanctuary hang as mere preparation and conclusion. Men think very little of worship as they enter a sanctuary of a Protestant and unliturgical Church. They go to it as they would to a scientific or

literary lecture-room, making between the two no essential distinction but such as exists in the topics that are in both illustrated and enforced. Is this an exaggerated statement? Observe the passivity of a congregation during the services preliminary to the delivery of the discourse—the readiness with which they consent to pass them over into other hands—the strange irreverence which men often manifest in the Lord's house—and the fact that the profit of any service is almost all made to depend upon the excellence or defect of the sermons. And the existence of this same idea, is it not often apparent in the mind of the minister himself? Does he not frequently so conduct the services of God's house as to make it simply a school for religious instruction? A discourse elaborately prepared and effectively delivered, is it not oftentimes both preceded and followed by the most unstudied and inappropriate utterances of prayer? Of how many divines, eloquent when, for God, they speak to men, could it be said, as was said of the late Dr. Griffin, that his most eloquent utterances were always when for men he spoke to God?

No one familiar with the additions that have recently been made to our hymnology can have failed to notice how subjective in their character they generally are. They are descriptive of some peculiar phase of the believer's inner life. To those old psalms and hymns of lofty praise, that bore the spirit away from itself, and brought it to lie down, in the deepest reverence, before Jehovah's throne, few additions have, in these modern times, been made. Indeed, the element of instruction in divine service, has so absorbed that of worship as to make ministers feel that everything in the shape of song must be made to bear directly upon the topic of discourse. We have few doxologies in the modern Church. We sing doctrine, and Christian experience, and stirring exhortations to duty, more than we sing praise.

It is, then, no unimportant subject, no subject devoid of practical interest, that we propose to discuss in this Article. Our theme is *worship—its importance as an element of sanctuary service.*

In its illustration, our first argument will be drawn from the

natural influence of worship, as we have already briefly defined it. Worship exercises the affections. In those parts of divine service embraced under this division the heart takes the lead. While instruction has immediate respect to the understanding and conscience, worship has regard to the emotions and affections of the soul. God's character and law, his efficacious grace and everlasting faithfulness, are here made matters, not of speculative inquiry, but of taste and experience. "Worship is not study; it is not mind grappling with the severities of knowledge, but it is the heart breathing its wants into the ear of God in praise or prayer, or in meditating in delightful complacency upon his character and love." And how happy the effect of this upon the soul must be, is sufficiently evident from the single fact that it is the affections, more than either the reason or conscience, that constitutes the life-blood of vital religion. The deep home of sin is in the heart. If this is right, the conscience would seldom be wrong, and reason would never be driven from her throne. "None deny," says Lord Bacon, "there is a God, but those for whom it maketh that there was no God." And all the other forms of religious skepticism have the same origin. The causes of infidelity are eth i cal, rather than intellectual.

Moreover, though the truth is the instrument of sanctification, it does not hence follow that the intellect alone has business with it, or alone can rightly understand it. The heart has much to do with the truth. It needs its impulse quite as much as the mind needs its light. When the soul comes to employ it, in intercourse with God, divine truth has a very different aspect from that which it has when simply examined in itself. Those great and deep doctrines of revelation which men grapple with in vain, when, with an undevout intellect, they sit in judgment upon them, lose much of their power to perplex and harass when received with that lowliness of spirit which true worship begets. Few men misunderstand God on their knees. What a felicitous illustration of this thought is the seventy-third Psalm! The divine ways, intellectually considered, brought the Psalmist into perplexity. He could not understand them. The impenetrable shade of a dark cloud hung over them, and

all his sagacity in study could not bring peace to his mind. Hear his language: "But as for me, my feet were almost gone; my steps had well nigh slipped. For I was envious at the foolish, when I saw the prosperity of the wicked." So soon, however, as this mere speculation ceased, and, in the spirit of a sincere worshipper, Asaph went into the sanctuary of God, and there meditated upon His ways, the cloud was lifted, the enigma solved, and the Psalm closes with the satisfied exclamation, "It is good for me to draw near to God. I have put my trust in the Lord God."

The late Dr. Ebenezer Porter, in his Lectures on Homiletics, remarks that "the usefulness of a minister depends, in no small measure, on the character of his public prayers," and enforces this remark by the following suggestive thoughts upon the influence of this part of sanctuary service: "When the devotions of the sanctuary have their proper effect, they prepare the hearers to listen, with deep and solemn interest, to the instructions delivered from the pulpit. Just so far as the prayer in which they have joined has brought them to *feel* the impressions of a present God in the sanctuary, and the eternal retributions to which they are going, their minds are divested of listlessness, and prejudice, and fastidious criticism, and they will hear a sermon with candor and humility. Besides, what is it that gives a sermon *power* over the hearts of hearers? It is a solemn persuasion that the preacher himself is deeply impressed with the everlasting importance of the truths which he delivers. But how shall they be thus persuaded, unless the thing is a reality? And how shall the minister deeply *feel* the weight of truth in his sermon, if his heart has been cold in the devotional exercises which have gone before it? The heart which slumbers in speaking to God, and wakes up in speaking to men, has but a false and factitious warmth, which, in its influence on other hearts, is totally different from the genuine glow of religious feeling. There may be reasons why a man should be fervent in his devotions, and yet fail of delivering an interesting sermon. But the converse is a much more rare occurrence, namely, that the hearers are disappointed by an impressive and powerful sermon from the same lips that had just

uttered a dull and formal prayer. If you would be a successful preacher, you must not fail essentially in public prayer."*

But, passing the argument drawn from the natural influence of worship to show its importance as an element of sanctuary service, the reader will notice, as illustrating still farther our subject, the great prominence that was given to worship, both in the Jewish and ancient Christian Church. The Roman Catholic hierarchy, modelling itself confessedly from the old temple of worship of the Jews, is perfectly consistent in excluding from its service the element of instruction. When the Israelites went up to their temple at Jerusalem, either at the hour of daily prayer or upon one of the great feasts of their nation, it was not to listen to any formal exhibition of divine truth. There were, indeed, in Judea, prophets; and schools of the prophets were established at Bethel, Naioth, and Jericho; and these prophets were a class of teachers. Their addresses, however, were delivered only on extraordinary occasions, and when some divine afflatus prompted them to utter either an intimation of mercy or a threatening of wrath. In the ordinary religious services of the Jews there was nothing that would at all correspond to what, in this day, we call the preaching of the word. Everything was worship. All the rights and ceremonial observances of both the tabernacle and the temple, while they symbolically represented truth, dimly shadowed forth the divine greatness, glory, justice, grace, and thus indirectly taught them, were especially calculated and designed to impress sentiments of the profoundest reverence and awe of Jehovah upon every mind. The Israelites went up to Jerusalem to worship. Their song, as they entered the temple, was, "O come let us worship and bow down; let us kneel before the Lord our maker." Indeed, so prominent was this element of worship in all the public religious services of the Jews, that it was not until after their return from captivity in Babylon, and the establishment of synagogues, that even the reading of the Old Testament Scriptures became with them a regular part of any service.

How prominent, also, as an element of sanctuary service, was worship in the early Christian Church! Modelled after

* Porter's Lectures on Homiletics, p. 293.

the Jewish synagogue, both as to its officers and the order of its services, primitive Christians did not, indeed, exclude instruction from their holy assemblies. Portions of the Old Testament, of the Gospel, and of the apostolic epistles were read at all their public religious meetings. But this, with them, formed almost all the instruction of the sanctuary. Mosheim asserts that it was sometimes literally *all*, and that frequently no sermon followed this reading of the Scriptures.* Neander, however, is, we suppose, more true to history, when he says that "this reading was followed by a short and very simple address, in familiar language, such as the heart prompted at the moment, and which contained an exposition or application of what had been read."† It is in the writings of Justin Martyr, that we find the first mention of a Christian sermon, and very little is there, in his language, to identify it with a modern pulpit discourse: "After the reading is ended, the minister of the assembly makes an address, in which he admonishes and exhorts the people to imitate the virtues which it enjoins."* "It was," says the same distinguished historian already quoted, (Neander,) "among the Greeks, who were more given to the culture of rhetoric, that the sermons first began to take a wider range, and to assume an important place in the acts of worship."

But to illustrate the prominence that worship, as an element of sanctuary service, had in the early Church, there is perhaps nothing so impressive as the simple presentation of its order of service, or, in other words, a glance at its "Directory for Worship." And remembering that the celebration of the Lord's Supper formed a part of every public religious service among the primitive disciples of Christ, we may take the following as a truthful statement of their mode of conducting divine worship. We quote again from Justin Martyr: "On the day which is called Sunday, there is an assembly in one place of all who dwell either in towns or in the country, and the me-

---

* Ancient Christianity Exemplified, p. 348.

† Neander's Church History, Vol. I., p. 303.

moirs of the apostles, or the writings of the prophets, are read, *as long as time permits*. Then, when the reader has ceased, the President delivers a discourse, in which he reminds and exhorts them to the imitation of all these good things. We then all stand up and offer our prayers. Then, as we have already said, when we cease from prayer, bread is brought, and wine and water; and the President, in like manner, offers up prayers and praises, according to his ability, and the people express their assent by saying, Amen. The consecrated elements are then distributed and received by every one, and a portion is sent by the deacons to those who are absent."*

But, again, as an element of sanctuary service, the importance of worship is clearly indicated by the special and ample provision for its maintenance that God has made in his word. While the Bible is doubtless intended principally to be a revelation of the divine will to man, and contains a didactic statement of those doctrines and facts, important for men to know, but which natural religion is unable to disclose, it is still interesting to observe how large a portion of it is adapted for purposes of devotion, and seems for this end mainly to have been written. Instead of being altogether an abstract and objective treatise on religion, God's word is full of the effusions of subjective piety. With the great doctrines it teaches, are devout prayers, hymns of praise, and narratives of religious experience. Indeed, whole chapters, and even books of this character, may be found in the sacred volume. These contain very little direct instruction. What they teach is incidental and secondary. Their grand purpose is to meet the wants, in all ages, of Christian devotion. They are the inspired breathings of pious hearts, and are preserved in the sacred canon as the food for the devotion of God's people in all ages of the Church.

The book of Psalms is a most striking illustration of this remark. It is, what its title indicates, the praises of the Lord. It is an epitome of the whole Bible, adapted to purposes of de-

---

* Justin Mar. Apol., p. 87.

votion. For doctrinal instruction, men do not ordinarily resort to it. When the Council of Toulouse, (A. D. 1229,) prohibited the Bible to laymen, they excepted the Book of Psalms. It was not sufficiently didactic to awaken the fears of the Papacy; yet, in its language, have the prayers and praises of the Church been for ages ascending to God. "That which we read," says Bishop Horne, "as a matter of speculation, in the other Scriptures, is reduced to practice when we recite it in the Psalms: in those repentance and faith are described, but in these they are acted; by a perusal of the former, we learn how others served God; but by using the latter we serve him ourselves. The book is like the paradise of Eden. It affords us, in perfection, though in minature, everything that groweth elsewhere, "every tree that is pleasant to the sight and good for food," and, above all, what was there lost, is here restored—the tree of life in the midst of the garden.* And of the same import are these words of Calvin, in the preface of his Exposition of the Psalms: "Other portions of the Scriptures contain *commandments*, whose transmission the Lord enjoined upon his servants; but in the Psalms the prophets, communing with God, and uncovering their inmost feelings, call and urge every reader to thanksgiving and praise.

The Sacred Scriptures, then, we assert, comprise precisely the same great elements that we have seen belonging to the services of God's house. One portion was designed for instruction, another for worship. We go to the Epistles for doctrine, and to the Psalms for devotion; and just as both are important parts of God's word, and as that word could not be complete should either be wanting, so, in the services of the sanctuary, men should worship God—they should bow down and kneel before the Lord their Maker, as well as listen to the teachings of his word.

But once more, to illustrate the importance of worship as an element of sanctuary service, observe the evils that result from its neglect, or from failing to give to it its true place. The

---

* Horne's Commentary on the Psalms, Vol. I., p. 2.

most casual observer cannot fail to notice, in the external demeanor of a Catholic and a Protestant congregation, a contrast that is not always creditable to the latter. Charge what errors in doctrine and practice he may upon the Papal Church—and these, we acknowledge, are both numerous and weighty—it must still be conceded that it is, seemingly at least, more obedient to that command, "Keep thy foot when thou goest to the house of God," than many other Churches that hold a more scriptural faith. And while, for this, one reason is, unquestionably, a mistaken notion of the peculiar sanctity of the place in which divine service is held—arising from the idea that the true shekinah is in an earthly temple, and not in the individual heart, another is the great prominence which it gives to the element of worship in all its religious exercises. Let a Protestant congregation, as it enters the sanctuary, *feel* that something more than mere *sermon-hearing* has convened them; let them realize that, as a company of dependent and guilty creatures, they have came together to worship that Divine Being who, is the author of all their blessings, and who is alone able to remit to them the guilt of their sins; and who can doubt but a change, most happy, would be wrought upon their whole external deportment? To regard the sanctuary simply as a place of instruction, is at once to place it on a level with the scientific or literary lecture-room—save that in the former the theme of the speaker's discourse is more important than in the latter. No wonder that, with such views of God's house, men are oftentimes indifferent as to whether they are present at the commencement of its services or not; are so listless during part of its exercises as to need something to recall their fugitive minds to them,—as did the bells tied to the high-priest's garments between the pomegranates among the Jews, and which rang upon the least movement of his person; and so frequently employ the last moments of the service in preparation for a speedy departure. Men must feel that "the Lord is in his holy temple," and that they have come up thither to meet and to worship Him, before they will keep silence in His presence. As it was the vision of God, in the fire that enveloped

the bush on Horeb, and the voice of Jehovah that proceeded from it, that led Moses to put off the shoes from his feet, and to stand in holy awe before it,—so it is the voice and vision of the same Jehovah, in his house, that will alone produce in man that reverence which becomes the sanctuary.

And to the same cause do we attribute much of that critical spirit which men so often bring with them into God's house. With the idea of worship uppermost, or even prominent, in the mind of a congregation, what though the speaker drop an unhandsome word, though his style have not all the mellifluent flow of the schools, and his discourse will not bear the test of a rigid criticism? *God is still in his house.* Indeed, the thought of coming up into the sanctuary to meet God, to adore him for all his matchless perfections, and to receive his benediction, how does it not only disarm criticism, but lead us even to forget that there is any thing human in the services to criticise! To come up into God's house, simply to hear a sermon or two, ends frequently only in the censure or laudation of the preacher; but to go up into that same sanctuary to worship God, has, as its natural result, enlarged conceptions of the greatness of the preacher's God.

Irregularity likewise of attendance upon God's house, and that attendance graduated by the character of the expected discourse, is among the evils that forgetfulness of worship, as an element of sanctuary service, has a tendency to produce. Some of our oldest and wisest divines have remarked, that there seems to be of late, even among the professed followers of Christ, a far lower sense of obligation, with reference to the attendance upon God's house, than formerly. Many Christians now permit very trivial causes to keep them from filling their place in the sanctuary. They regard church-going rather as a privilege than a duty, and are quite satisfied if they avail themselves of it occasionally, or, at the most, upon a part only of the Sabbath. And is not this the necessary result of that theory or practice of sanctuary service which wholly ignores the element of worship? If the church is man's church, and the leading conception in the mind is the listening to a

set discourse, is it strange that men deem it a matter of little moment whether they attend regularly upon its services? Ay, more; if spiritual instruction constitute the very essence of a sanctuary service—if we are to go to God's house alone to be taught divine truth—why should not a man stay away from it, when at home, by his own meditations or reading, he honestly believes that that spiritual enlightenment would best be promoted? That God should be adored, and that this adoration should have some outward expression, all men instinctively feel. Satisfy them, then, that this is the great aim of sanctuary service, and they will not so often, and for causes so trivial, desert it. And are not Protestant and unliturgical churches just here in great danger of losing their hold upon the unsanctified masses? With the Church nothing but a school, can all the teachers be so eloquent, or any one always so eloquent, as to receive, on the part of voluntary pupils, constant and unvaried attendance? Apart from the direct outpouring of the Divine Spirit, we do not believe that any thing would be more effectual in enlarging Sabbath congregations, and making them more uniform in numbers, than an increased attention to worship as an element of sanctuary service.

It only remains on this part of our subject, that we should invite the careful attention of our readers to the excellent standards of our Church; for all that we have said upon the importance of worship, as an element of sanctuary service, is in them strikingly confirmed and enforced. The holy men of God who framed "the Constitution of the Presbyterian Church," believed in the true theory of worship. They never regarded the house of God as a mere place for instruction. On the contrary, fearing that this might be the tendency of a rigid simplicity and careful avoidance of all forms, they solemnly warned us against this error. In the sixth chapter of our Directory for Worship—a chapter entitled, "Of the Preaching of the Word"—and in the fifth section, we read: "As one primary design of public ordinances is to pay social acts of homage to the Most High God, ministers ought to be careful not to make their sermons so long as to interfere with or exclude *the more important duties of prayer and praise*, but preserve a just pro-

portion between the several parts of public worship." Again, in the chapter entitled "Of the Singing of Psalms," (chap. iv.,) we have the following pertinent suggestion (section iv.:) "The proportion of the time of public worship to be spent in singing is left to the prudence of every minister; but it is recommended that more time be allowed for this excellent part of divine service, than has been usual in most of our churches." And similar statements may be found in the chapter on Public Prayer (chap. v.:) "It is the indispensable duty," we read, "of every minister, previously to his entering on his office, to prepare and qualify himself for this part of his duty, as well as for preaching. He ought, by a thorough acquaintance with the Holy Scriptures, by reading the best writers on the subject, by meditation, and by a life of communion with God in secret, to endeavor to acquire both the spirit and the gift of prayer. Not only so, but when he is to enter on particular acts of worship, he should endeavor to compose his spirit, and to digest his thoughts for prayer, that it may be performed with dignity and propriety, as well as to the profit of those who join in it, and that he may not disgrace that important service, by mean, vulgar, or extravagant effusions."

But from this view of the importance of worship, as an element of sanctuary service, it is time that we should pass to the inquiry, How may our ideal be realized? How—supposing worship with us to have somewhat fallen out of its true place in the order of God's house—may it therein be reinstated? And that we may not be misunderstood in any thing that we have already said, let it here be distinctly remarked, that this end is not to be obtained by any *decrease* in our sanctuary service of the element of instruction, nor yet by the *subordination* of preaching to worship. This, as we have already seen, is a corollary from the erroneous doctrine of the priestly character of the Christian ministry. Indeed, instead of lowering the standard of preaching, even intellectually considered, everything should be done to elevate it. Men called to be the heralds of salvation, should pour into their discourses the richest treasures of their learning, and seek, as vigorous intellectual exercises, to command attention for their sermons. In this

age, when even the common mind gains a power of sustained thought, on religious subjects, which it has not on any other, and is thus possessed "with an intelligence that outruns its culture," it will not do for the minister of Christ, in his pulpit labors, to satisfy himself with unpremeditated utterances. The people demand strong thought. They crave argument. Their earnest souls will not be content with mere rhetorical tinsel. They will listen and for awhile be pleased with the gay fancies that play over the surface of a discourse; but unless, beneath all this, there is the substratum of real and vigorous thought, their pleasure will be as ephemeral as their profit.

Nor would it be difficult here to show that wherever real religion has decayed, it has uniformly been marked by a corresponding declension, both in the character and amount of preaching. The priestly theory of ministerial character, even in its most attenuated form—that form which has been admitted into the constitution of some Protestant churches—as it elevates the altar above the pulpit, has always been connected with a weak and emasculated Christianity. It is not, then, to any rivalry with instruction that we would bring worship. We have no aim to weaken in any mind the importance of preaching, in our efforts to magnify, in the esteem of the Church, other portions of her service.

But, again, to give worship its true place in the services of God's house, let no one suppose that the adoption of a liturgy, or the assumption of an ecclesiastical dress, is either necessary or expedient. That there is, at this day, a tendency in the Church generally toward a liturgical service, will, we suppose, be universally conceded. We see it in the revision by some Churches of their old and long disused formularies of worship, in the reprint of the different liturgies of the Reformers, and, perhaps, we may add, in the increased popularity of the ritual sects. And the main cause of this is to be found in the same feeling that prompts the writing of this Article. As men enter the sanctuary, and go with an unliturgical denomination through its services, they oftentimes feel that something is wanting—that the necessities of the soul have not been fully met; that they have not *worshipped* God; and attributing this to the

simplicity of the service, and to the entire absence of all forms, they at once conclude that what the service wants for its completion is nothing more than the presence of a prescribed and imposing ceremonial. But it is not so with us. Sharing somewhat in this feeling of the want of worship in our sanctuary service, we have no idea that the want is to be satisfied in the manner proposed. We think we see a more excellent way than this.

In favor of the use of liturgies, it may, indeed, be truthfully said, that all the Reformed Churches in the sixteenth century employed them, to some extent. Formularies of worship were composed by Melanchthon, Calvin, Bucer, and Knox, and were, in their respective churches, continued for many years in constant observance. But their use was optional, and that only in parts of the service, combined with extempore prayer in other parts. For the precedents which are to control our conduct in this matter, we choose to go still further back in the history of the Church. We look to apostolic usage, and surely there is nothing in it that would incline us for one moment to the use of liturgical forms. Indeed, there is something that savors not a little of the ridiculous in the very thought of Paul carrying with him, in his itinerancy, "prayer-book and gown," and essaying to preach only when provided with these helps and adornments of worship. "*Sine monitore, quia de pectore oramus,*" are the well-known words of Tertullian, and doubtless express the universal usage of the primitive Church. It was not until the fifth century that forms of prayer were prescribed by public authority.*

* "When the Arian and Pelagian doctrines began seriously to disturb the Church, various forms of expression, occasioned by public controversy, gradually insinuated themselves into the language of prayer; and it was deemed necessary by the Council of Laodicea to require, by ecclesiastical regulations, that ministers, instead of using the liberty before enjoyed, should always keep to one form of prayer; that is, should not pray 'pro arbitrio, sed semper easdem preces.' This form, however, each minister *might compose for himself*, provided that 'before using it, he should consult with learned and experienced brethren.' This regulation was explained as already in existence, by the Council of Carthage, A. D. 397. About twenty years after this, in 416, the Council of Milan ordained that none should use set forms of prayer, except such as were approved in a Synod.—Porter's Lectures, p. 285.

Moreover, although it has been said "that the adoption of a liturgy is peculiarly consonant with the spirit and usage of the Presbyterian Church, inasmuch as it is characterized by strict and scrupulous adherence to established formulas of doctrine and discipline," we venture to affirm that the very opposite is true. Its "spirit" is that of the largest liberty consistent with order and truth. It seeks to bind the faith of men only to the great essentials of doctrine. It builds up no high fence of exclusion around either the pulpit or the communion-table. Men, "holding the Head," are freely welcome to both. It is emphatically a missionary Church, and cannot, therefore, so cumber itself with burdensome rites, as to be unadapted to the necessities of a simple people and a widely scattered population. It is not a Church for great cities only, where all the factitious adornments of worship may be easily had, but it is a Church for all men, wherever God in his providence may cast their lot. It is a Church, indissolubly connected, in all its history with revivals of religion; and this its distinctive spirit would go out of it, the very moment that we attempted to tie it down to the rigidity of a pre-composed service. Nor is it true that the adoption of a liturgy is consonant with the "usage" of the Presbyterian Church. It was when John Knox's "Book of Common Order" was generally used in the Scottish Kirk, that the Westminster Assembly prepared our excellent "Directory for Worship," and in that we have the following direct testimony against the adoption of a liturgical service: "We do not approve, as is well known, of confining ministers to set or fixed forms of prayer" (chap. v., sect. iv.) Shortly after this, written forms of prayer were laid aside in the Presbyterian Church of Scotland, and have never since been adopted.

In our earnest desire, then, to give to worship a larger place in our sanctuary service than it now holds, let it distinctly be understood that we have no sympathy with that class of minds among us, who are continually hankering after a ritual, and who make themselves the small imitators of other denominations than their own. No; away with prayer-book and gown, rubrics and bands! Associations of the mystical Babylon still cluster around them. Give us a free voice and a free

arm, as we attempt to direct the worship of the sanctuary. Let the full soul pour out itself in gracious expressions of its holy thoughts into the bosom of the Almighty; and if there should be some stops or solecisms in the fervent utterance of our wants, these are so far from being offensive, that they are the most pleasing music to the ears of that God unto whom our prayers come. To this imperfect elocution, our Heavenly Father is no otherwise affected, than an indulgent earthly parent is to the clipped and broken language of his dear child.

But if our ideal of the importance of worship, as an element of sanctuary service, is to be realized, neither by the subordination to it of preaching, nor yet by the adoption of a liturgy—what, the inquiry returns to us, can we do toward the accomplishment of this end? In reply, we will direct our remarks to those parts of the services of God's house that may, with some propriety, be arranged under the head of worship—viz., its praises and prayers.

And first, with reference to the praises of God's house: We have already remarked upon the character of almost all the additions which have recently been made to the hymnology of the Church. Many of them are *experimental.* They faithfully and sometimes touchingly describe some inward struggle of the soul. Others are *supplicatory.* They are prayers, in verse. A few are *hortatory.* They are stirring appeals to repentance or to Christian activity. And, still again, some are *doctrinal.* Their aim is to teach or impress upon the mind some great truth of religion. But where in this catalogue, are the distinctively objective hymns—the hymns in which both writer and reader come entirely out of themselves, magnify God, and have their whole souls ravished by the conception of His matchless perfections? That these experimental and supplicatory hymns are greatly needed in the Church—indeed, that we cannot permit them to die, we readily concede. But their proper place is it not the closet, rather than the sanctuary; and the social meeting of believers, rather than the great congregation of the people? Should we take the Book of Psalms as our model, as we certainly ought to do, we would not, indeed, exclude all experimental hymns from our sanctuary services, for many of the

Psalms are the narratives of the writers' experience; but certainly this class would be far fewer in number than those which summon us to lofty praise. With David as our example, we would sing not so much of ourselves as of God.

But the character of the recent additions to our hymnology, fairly indicates the character of our Church praise. Indeed, it is the demand which ministers have made for this class of hymns that has occasioned their large supply. Our books fast filling up with them, they are fast becoming the staple of our songs. It is now a rare thing, in some of our congregations, to be invited to unite in a single Psalm or hymn that is distinctively one of praise. If the preacher design to discourse to us upon some point of doctrinal theology, or to present us with some peculiar phase of religious experience, or to exhort the impenitent at once to come to Christ as their Saviour, he seeks in all his psalmody to enforce his teachings. And the necessary result of this, must it not be to make the Church a school, and to eliminate, from all its service, the element of worship? And with this character of the hymns of the Church, will its music, of course, correspond; and hence, in the place of those old choral tunes which, swelling up to heaven with the sweet accord of many voices, went down into the very depths of the soul, awakening its deepest and strongest emotions—we have sometimes dry and business-like airs, suited for didactic verse, and anon sentimental songs, artistically executed, by a select few.

Moreover, to the element of worship, in that part of the services of God's house which we are now considering, nothing is more fatal than that entire passivity which ordinarily obtains in our congregations. Where the singing is done by proxy, there can be, on the part of the people, no suitable worship. All choirs that are not the simple leaders of the congregation in sacred song, are ruinous to devotion. The idea that any Church worships God in its music, when this is performed wholly by a company of hired singers, is perfectly preposterous. If any of our readers regard this language as extravagant, let them observe for a moment the contrast, when after the closing hymn of a religious service, artistically sung in some unknown

strains by a select choir, the whole congregation rise and unite their many voices in singing, in some familiar tune, the Doxology. The first was a musical performance, the last divine worship. In the first the cultivated ear was regaled by the melody of sweet sounds; in the last, when "that vast, concording unity of the whole congregational chorus" came, the pious heart was transported and wrapt up in high and heavenly contemplations.

There is, to us, hardly anything in the history of the Reformation more interesting than the influence which was then exerted upon the world by the sacred songs of the Church. When John Calvin, availing himself of a metrical version of a few Psalms, made by Clement Marot, introduced them into his church at Geneva, and, abandoning the antiphonal chanting, in which the people took no part, invited them all to participate in the singing, the effect was electric. The new mode of worship was welcomed with unbounded enthusiasm. Supplying a real and felt want of the soul, the hearts of the people gratefully opened to receive it. And "from Geneva the golden candlestick sent forth its rays far and wide. France and Germany were instantly infatuated with a love of psalm-singing. The energetic hymns of Geneva exhilarated the convivial assemblies of the Calvinists, were commonly heard in the streets, and accompanied the labors of the artificer. They found their way to the cities of the Low Countries, and under their inspiration many of the weavers and woollen manufacturers of Flanders left their looms and entered the ministry of the gospel. . . . . Hymns in the vernacular dialects became a power in the Reformation, co-ordinate with that of the pulpit. Upon the masses of the people they were far more potent than any other uninspired productions of the press. At Augsburg, in 1551, three or four thousand singing together at a time was "but a trifle." The youth of the day sung them in place of ribald songs; mothers sung them beside the cradle; journeymen and servants sung them at their labor; market-men in the streets and husbandmen in the fields.*"

Alas for the contrast between this picture of the power of sacred song, in the days of the Reformation, and that which it

* Bibliotheca Sacra, vol. xvi., p. 192.

presents in our times! And can any doubt the reason? Though we do not sing our songs of Zion, as the Romish Church did, in a dead language and with alternate responses, do we not almost equally with her take away from the people all participation in this part of the service? Indeed, how much *church singing* is there in this day? What passes under this name, is it not almost altogether choir-singing? How many of our Christian congregations, in their acts of public praise, obey the command,

> "Both young men and maidens,
> Old men and children,
> Let them praise the name of the Lord?"

Strongly opposed as we are to restraining, in any way, the religious liberty of men, we, at times, almost desire that some authoritative voice could go out over all our churches, or some ecumenical council would publish the decree,

> "Let *the people* praise thee, O God!
> Let *all the people* praise thee!"

The second point upon which, in this connection, we proposed some remarks, was the *prayers of the sanctuary*.

We once heard a Christian minister, of large experience and discriminating intellect, remark that, after listening to the devotional exercises of a Presbyterian pastor for a few Sabbaths, he could, with a good degree of certainty, decide to which of the two great branches of that Church he belonged. If his prayers abounded in adoration, the inference was that he was a member of that division of our church which boasts "the higher Calvinism" as its creed. If, on the other hand, they were almost entirely made up of thanksgiving, confession and supplication, he was assigned to our own branch of the Church. And the philosophical explanation of this difference was supposed to be found in the alleged fact, that while the former make the sovereignty of God the stand-point of their theology, we assign to man's free agency the same pre-eminence. The distinction we do not believe is true, nor can we admit the fact in which its explanation is supposed to be found. The incident, however, is sufficient to suggest what we are inclined to regard as a very general defect in public prayer.

Should we make an exhaustive catalogue of all the examples of this kind of devotion recorded in the Bible, and carefully examine the structure of each, we would discern that adoration had in them all a large place. The old prophets, as they approached the throne of the Almighty, were abased by their lofty conceptions of his greatness, and their first utterances were always the expression of this feeling. They applied to God so many different appellations that they seem to us almost like vain repetitions, and in the unfolding of any of his perfections had a manifoldness of expression hardly suited to our fastidious taste. Their language was, "The Lord is the true God; he is the living God, and an everlasting king." (Jer. x., 10.) "Thou, even thou, art Lord alone; thou hast made heaven, the heaven of heavens, with all their host; the earth, and all things that are therein; the seas, and all that is therein; and thou preservest them all; and the host of heaven worshippeth thee." (Neh., ix., 6.) The learned Lightfoot, in speaking of the prayers of the Jews, "both ordinary and occasional," says that "while it cannot be denied but that they had their petitionary or supplicatory prayers, it must still be conceded that the benedictory or doxological prayers were more in number, and more large and copious."* And this view of the importance of adoration in prayer, how forcibly is it taught in the standards of our Church! In the chapter of our Directory for Worship (v.) entitled "Of Public Prayer," the following are the opening sentences of a most admirable analysis of this part of divine service. (Section ii.) * * * "It is proper that, before sermon, there should be a full and comprehensive prayer. First, *adoring* the glory and perfections of God, as they are made known to us in the works of creation, in the conduct of Providence, and in the clear and full revelation he hath made of himself in his written word."

A more free use, in prayer, of Scriptural words and phrases would also, we think, increase in our sanctuary service the element of worship. The Bible, when pertinently quoted in prayer, inspires *reverence*. It is God's word, and every man feels that it is peculiarly appropriate, in addressing Jehovah, that he

* Lightfoot's Works, vol. xii., p. 106.

should employ His own language. Moreover, inspired words never become trite or tedious. They will bear repetition, as no human compositions will. And yet, again, the oriental cast of the Bible, its fervor and unction of style, pre-eminently fit it to be the great help of our devotion. Addison has beautifully expressed this thought in an essay in the Spectator: "There is a certain coldness in the phrases of European languages, compared with the oriental forms of speech. The English tongue has received innumerable improvements from an infusion of Hebraisms, derived out of the practical passages in holy writ. They warm and animate our language, give it force and energy, and convey our thoughts in ardent and intense phrases. There is something in this kind of diction that often sets the mind in a flame, and makes our hearts burn within us. How cold and dead is a prayer composed in the most elegant forms of speech, when it is not heightened by that solemnity of phrase which may be drawn from the sacred writings!"

A more serious defect, and one still more inimical to true worship, is what has aptly been called "indolence in prayer." Many seem to forget that prayer is a mental exercise. They regard it as altogether an inspiration. Holding to the truth that "the preparation of the heart in man, and the answer of the tongue, is from the Lord," they make this indulgence of their weakness an encouragement of their indolence. They forget that the law of blessing, in this as in other things, allies it, in some sort, with struggles of our own. Because a man may pray with the intellect without praying with the heart, they infer the converse that a man may pray with the heart without praying with the intellect. Not a few ministers of the gospel, who would regard it as the highest presumption to appear before their people and to attempt to preach without any previous preparation, trusting that "the Spirit would help their infirmities," do still habitually attempt to lead the devotions of a whole congregation, as they approach the throne of grace, with the unstudied and spontaneous utterances of the moment. When a minister or layman is peculiarly felicitous in leading the devotions of a congregation, nothing is more common than to speak of him as being specially gifted in prayer, just as if this capa-

city, like every other, was not the reward of practiced effort. When Bishop Patrick was a young man, and the rector of a rural parish, he was eminent for his fervor in prayer. After wearing, however, for a few years, the lawn sleeves and mitre, he was actually constrained to apologize to an old dissenting friend, whose family devotions he one morning led, for his hesitancy and embarrassment. Men cannot have profound feeling on any subject without having previously had upon it sound thought. Truth burns in the heart, after it has been pondered by the intellect. "While I was musing," said David, "the fire burned; then spake I with my tongue." How a minister can have deep and genuine feeling in prayer, when the themes upon which he dwells have not previously been made the subjects of careful thought, we confess, seems to us a physiological impossibility.

And this view of prayer is as biblical as it is philosophical. The author of "The Still Hour," after alluding to the remark of Coleridge, "that he thought the act of praying to be, in its most perfect form, the very highest energy of which the human heart was capable," adds: "Many Scriptural representations of the idea of devotion come up fully to this mark. The prayer of a righteous man, that availeth much, which our English Bible so infelicitously describes as 'effectual, fervent,' is, in the original, an energetic prayer, a working prayer. . . . . What else, also, is the force of the frequent conjunction of 'watching' and 'praying,' in the scriptural style of exhortation to the duties of the closet? Thus: 'Watch and pray;' 'watch unto prayer;' 'praying always and watching;' 'continue in prayer and watch.' There is no mental lassitude, no self-indulgence, here. It was a lament of the prophet over the degeneracy of God's people, 'None stirreth himself up to take hold on thee.' Paul exhorts the Romans to 'strive together with their prayers,' and commends an ancient preacher to the confidence of the Colossians as one who labored fervently in prayers. There is no droning or drawling effort here."*

But, with regard to public prayer, in its connection with worship as an element of sanctuary service, we have one other

* The Still Hour, pp. 70 and 71.

remark to make; and, though some of our readers may regard it as unimportant, if not trivial, we cannot, ourselves, thus esteem it. In entering upon this part of the service of God's house there should be, with every worshipper, a change of physical position, and the assumption of a reverential posture. We say, first, a change of position, to indicate, by some outward act, the inward approach of the soul to God; and, secondly, the assumption of a reverential posture; for such is certainly His due, before whom even angels veil their faces. Much discussion has been had as to what is the precise posture that a congregation should assume in prayer; but, supposing that regard is had to both of the points just referred to—that the posture is reverential, and is a change from that assumed by the assembly in the other parts of service—we cannot regard this discussion as important. Few things, however, are more fatal to worship than that entire passivity which leads a congregation never once to change its posture, from the invocation to the benediction. This custom, now so prevalent in many of our religious assemblies, is a twin error to choir-singing. They generally go along hand in hand: they are seldom found alone. But that will be a happy day to the Church when upon both she will indignantly frown.

In closing this Article we cannot refrain from inviting the special attention of our readers to a thought which, although it has appeared all along the line of our argument, is still worthy of a separate and distinct notice. The thought is this: *All that is necessary to give to worship, as an element of sanctuary service, its true importance, is a full and faithful development of that order which is embodied in our own Directory for Worship.* We frankly confess our sympathy with those who, upon retiring from some of our Presbyterian churches, after their Sabbath services are over, feel a measure of dissatisfaction. They have, indeed, been well instructed, but they have not worshipped. They have been in a school, rather than in a church. Their intellects have been fed, but their hearts have not been touched. *They have had nothing to do in the service.* But what, to meet this felt want, shall they do? Go elsewhere? Unite themselves with some liturgical church, though her doc-

trines and ministerial orders are opposed to their belief? Or, staying at home, shall they seek to graft upon the Presbyterian Church what is unscriptural and opposed both to her spirit and history? Whence this lack of true worship in her services? What is the cause of this deficiency, of which some complain? Is it inherent to her very structure? Is it of her essence, or simply a defect in her administration? We are bold to proclaim the latter. Let every minister and layman carefully study our Directory for Worship, and, in the services of God's house, faithfully carry out all its provisions, and every just ground for criticism in this particular will, we are sure, be removed. Worship and instruction, the two great elements of sanctuary service, will then have to each other their just relations. Neither will be unduly or disproportionably developed, but both in such beautiful symmetry as to make the whole appear but one act of grateful homage to Jehovah, just as a star, really binary, looks out upon us from the skies—one world.

Photomount
Pamphlet
Binder
Gaylord Bros., Inc.
Makers
Syracuse, N. Y.
PAT. JAN 21, 1908